

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-27 (canceled)

28. (Previously presented) A mortarless retaining wall block comprising:

- a) a block body having a front, a back, a top, a bottom, and first and second sides;
- b) a first inset in the first side of the block body extending from the block body top to the block body bottom, and a second inset in the second side of the block body extending from the block body top to the block body bottom;
- c) one or more locator protrusions formed integrally on the block body top or the block body bottom, at least a portion of each locator protrusion is adapted to fit within an inset on a block in an adjacent course of blocks when a plurality of the blocks are stacked in ascending courses to form a wall, and each locator protrusion having a generally forward-facing surface and a generally rearward-facing surface; and wherein
- d) in top plan view the block body has a first front edge, a first rear edge, a first side edge and a second side edge opposed to the first side edge, wherein
 - i) the first front edge extends from the first side edge to the second side edge and extends to the widest portion of the block body, and the first rear edge extends from the first side edge to the second side edge, and
 - ii) the first side edge includes a first converging portion and the second side edge includes a second converging portion that is opposed to the first converging portion, and the opposed converging portions converge towards each other as they extend toward the first rear edge and are each oriented at an oblique angle relative to the first rear edge;
- e) in front elevation view the block body has a front surface and the first front edge corresponds to the widest portion of the front surface;
- f) in side elevation view the block body has a second front edge, a second rear edge that is generally vertical, a top edge, and a bottom edge generally opposite the top edge, wherein
 - i) each locator protrusion projects above the top edge or below the bottom edge; and

ii) the top or bottom edge opposite the edge from which each locator protrusion projects extends from the second front edge to the second rear edge and is generally horizontal and generally lies on a first straight line.

29. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein:

a) in top plan view, each side edge further includes:

i) an inset portion corresponding to the inset in the respective first or second side of the block body, the inset portion having a forward edge portion and a rearward edge portion, the forward edge portion being spaced from the rearward edge portion and being positioned closer to the first front edge than is the rearward edge portion;

b) in side elevation view, each locator protrusion includes a forwardmost edge corresponding to the generally forward-facing surface of the locator protrusion and a rearwardmost edge corresponding to the generally rearward-facing surface of the locator protrusion; and

wherein the maximum front-to-back dimension, in side elevation view, between the forwardmost edge and the rearwardmost edge of each locator protrusion is smaller than the maximum front-to-back dimension, in top plan view, between the forward and rearward edge portions of the inset portions so that when a plurality of the blocks are stacked in ascending courses, portions of the insets and locator protrusions of adjacent blocks in adjacent courses contact each other in a shear-resisting position in which interference between the locator protrusions and insets resist the tendency of a block in the upper course to slide forwardly in response to the anticipated forces that will be exerted on the block by retained earth, and in which there is not interference between the locator protrusions and insets that will resist at least some rearward shifting of the upper course block.

30. (Previously presented) The block of claim 29, wherein the locator protrusions and insets are sized and shaped to permit relative rotation of the insets and protrusions to thereby facilitate the construction of serpentine walls while maintaining the shear-resisting position.

31. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein the block body comprises an opposed pair of legs extending from the first and second sides of the block body adjacent the back, and, in top plan view, the legs comprise third and fourth rear edges, and the first, third and fourth rear edges lie on a single generally straight line.

32. (Canceled)

33. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, in which the block comprises a single locator protrusion.

34. (Previously presented) The block of claim 33, in which the locator protrusion comprises two lobes and a narrowed portion between the lobes.

35. (Previously presented) The block of claim 29, in which each locator protrusion is formed on the block body in such a location relative to the insets that, when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses, and the protrusions and insets are positioned in the shear-resisting position, the blocks in each ascending course are set back from the blocks in the adjacent course below.

36. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein the block body has an open core portion extending from the top to the bottom.

37. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge is a single segment.

38. (Previously presented) The block of claim 37, wherein in the top plan view the segment is generally straight.

39. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises more than one segment.

40. (Previously presented) The block of claim 39, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises a generally straight segment.

41. (Previously presented) The block of claim 40, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises three generally straight segments.

42. (Previously presented) The block of any one of claims 37, 38, 39, 40, and 41, wherein the first front edge in the top plan view and the second front edge in the side elevation view are irregular in comparison to the second rear edge in the side elevation view.

43. (Previously presented) The block of claim 42, wherein the irregularity of the front edges is the result, at least in part, of a block-splitting process.

44. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein in the side elevation view a portion of the block body immediately behind the second front edge includes a decorative feature.

45. (Previously presented) The block of claim 44, wherein the decorative feature comprises a roughening of the block body.

46. (Previously presented) The block of claim 45, wherein the roughening is the result, at least in part, of a block-splitting process.

47. (Previously presented) The block of claim 28, wherein in the side elevation view substantially the entire bottom edge generally lies on the first straight line.

48. (Previously presented) The block of claim 29, wherein at least a portion of each locator protrusion has a curved side that is configured to contact an inset in a block in an adjacent course of blocks in the shear resisting position.

49. (Previously presented) The block of claim 29, wherein, in top plan view, the forward edge portions of the inset portions are generally parallel to at least a portion of the first front edge.

50. (Previously presented) The block of claim 29, wherein, in top plan view, the first and second converging portions extend between the first front edge and the forward edge portions of the inset portions of the first and second side edges, respectively.

51. (Previously presented) A mortarless retaining wall block comprising:

- a) a block body having a front, a back, a top, a bottom, and first and second sides;
- b) a first inset in the first side of the block body extending from the block body top to the block body bottom, and a second inset in the second side of the block body extending from the block body top to the block body bottom;
- c) one or more locator protrusions formed integrally on the block body top or the block body bottom, at least a portion of each locator protrusion is adapted to fit within an inset on a block in an adjacent course of blocks when a plurality of the blocks are stacked in ascending courses to form a wall, and each locator protrusion having a generally forward-facing surface and a generally rearward-facing surface; and wherein
 - d) in top plan view the block body has a first front edge, a first rear edge, a first side edge and a second side edge opposed to the first side edge, wherein
 - i) the first front edge extends from the first side edge to the second side edge and extends to the widest portion of the block body, and the first rear edge extends from the first side edge to the second side edge, and
 - ii) each side edge includes an inset portion corresponding to the inset in the respective first or second side of the block body, the inset portion having a forward edge portion and a rearward edge portion, the forward edge portion being spaced from the rearward edge portion and being positioned closer to the first front edge than is the rearward edge portion; and
 - e) in front elevation view the block body has a front surface and the first front edge corresponds to the widest portion of the front surface;

f) in side elevation view the block body has a second front edge, a second rear edge that is generally vertical, a top edge, and a bottom edge generally opposite the top edge, wherein

- i) each locator protrusion projects above the top edge or below the bottom edge, and
- i) each locator protrusion includes a forwardmost edge corresponding to the generally forward-facing surface of the locator protrusion and a rearwardmost edge corresponding to the generally rearward-facing surface of the locator protrusion,

g) wherein the maximum front-to-back dimension, in side elevation view, between the forwardmost edge and the rearwardmost edge of each locator protrusion is smaller than the maximum front-to-back dimension, in top plan view, between the forward and rearward edge portions of the inset portions so that when a plurality of the blocks are stacked in ascending courses, portions of the insets and locator protrusions of adjacent blocks in adjacent courses contact each other in a shear-resisting position in which interference between the locator protrusions and insets resist the tendency of a block in the upper course to slide forwardly in response to the anticipated forces that will be exerted on the block by retained earth, and in which there is not interference between the locator protrusions and insets that will resist at least some rearward shifting of the upper course block.

52. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein the locator protrusions and insets are sized and shaped to permit relative rotation of the insets and protrusions to thereby facilitate the construction of serpentine walls while maintaining the shear-resisting position.

53. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein the block body comprises an opposed pair of legs extending from the first and second sides of the block body adjacent the back, and, in top plan view, the legs comprise third and fourth rear edges, and the first, third and fourth rear edges lie on a single generally straight line.

54. (Canceled)

55. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, in which the block comprises a single locator protrusion.

56. (Previously presented) The block of claim 55, in which the locator protrusion comprises two lobes and a narrowed portion between the lobes.

57. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, in which each locator protrusion is formed on the block body in such a location relative to the insets that, when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses, and the protrusions and insets are positioned in the shear-resisting position, the blocks in each ascending course are set back from the blocks in the adjacent course below.

58. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein the block body has an open core portion extending from the top to the bottom.

59. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge is a single segment.

60. (Previously presented) The block of claim 59, wherein in the top plan view the segment is generally straight.

61. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises more than one segment.

62. (Previously presented) The block of claim 61, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises a generally straight segment.

63. (Previously presented) The block of claim 62, wherein in the top plan view the first front edge comprises three generally straight segments.

64. (Previously presented) The block of any one of claims 59, 60, 61, 62, and 63, wherein the first front edge in the top plan view and the second front edge in the side elevation view are irregular in comparison to the second rear edge in the side elevation view.

65. (Previously presented) The block of claim 64, wherein the irregularity of the front edges is the result, at least in part, of a block-splitting process.

66. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein in the side elevation view a portion of the block body immediately behind the second front edge includes a decorative feature.

67. (Previously presented) The block of claim 66, wherein the decorative feature comprises a roughening of the block body.

68. (Previously presented) The block of claim 67, wherein the roughening is the result, at least in part, of a block-splitting process.

69. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein at least a portion of each locator protrusion has a curved side that is configured to contact an inset in a block in an adjacent course of blocks in the shear resisting position.

70. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein, in top plan view, the forward edge portions of the inset portions are generally parallel to at least a portion of the first front edge.

71. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51, wherein, in top plan view, the first and second converging portions extend between the first front edge and the forward edge portions of the inset portions of the first and second side edges, respectively.

72. (Previously presented) The block of claim 51 wherein the first side edge includes a first converging portion and the second side edge includes a second converging portion that is

opposed to the first converging portion, and the opposed converging portions converge towards each other as they extend toward the first rear edge and are each oriented at an oblique angle relative to the first rear edge.

73. (Previously presented) A retaining wall block comprising:

- a front surface,
- a back surface,
- a top surface having at least a contact portion thereof that is generally horizontal and generally planar,
- a bottom surface having at least a contact portion thereof that is generally horizontal and generally planar and that is configured and adapted to rest upon the contact portion of the top surface of a like block when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses, and
- first and second sides,
- a first inset in said first side, and
- a second inset in said second side,

each said inset being delimited by a front wall and a back wall that each extend inwardly towards the opposite side, and

- a wall interconnecting said front and back walls,
- and one or more locator protrusions integrally formed on said top or bottom surface,
- said front, back and interconnecting walls each extending from a surface that is generally coplanar with the generally horizontal and generally planar contact portion of the surface opposite the surface on which the one or more locator protrusions are formed, wherein each locator protrusion is adapted to interact with a wall of an inset on a block in an adjacent course of blocks when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses to form a retaining wall so that the insets and locator protrusions of adjacent blocks in adjacent courses contact each other in a shear-resisting position in which interference between the locator protrusions and inset walls resist the tendency of a block in the upper course to slide forward in response to the anticipated forces that will be exerted on the block by retained earth; and

wherein the locator protrusions and insets are sized and shaped to permit relative rotation of the insets and protrusions to thereby facilitate the construction of serpentine walls while maintaining said shear-resisting position.

74. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73 wherein the one or more locator protrusions are formed on the block body in such a location relative to the insets that, when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses, and the protrusions and insets are in the shear-resisting position, the blocks in each ascending course are set back from the blocks in the adjacent course below.

75. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein, for each said inset, said front and back walls are substantially parallel to each other.

76. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein said front and back walls of the insets are substantially parallel to said back surface.

77. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein, for each said inset, the length of said front wall is greater than the length of said back wall.

78. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein, for each said inset, the height of said front, back and interconnecting walls is generally the same.

79. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein the one or more protrusions each include a curved portion that is configured to contact the front or back wall of an inset in the shear resisting position.

80. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73, wherein the distance between said generally horizontal and generally planar portions of said top surface and said bottom surface is substantially equal to the height of said front surface.

81. (Previously presented) The block of claim 73 wherein the locator protrusion comprises first and second curved end sections between which is positioned a joining section.

82. (Previously presented) A retaining wall block comprising:

a front surface,
a rear surface,
a pair of opposed sides having surfaces that converge toward each other as they extend from the front surface toward the rear surface,
opposed top and bottom surfaces,
one or more locator protrusions integrally formed on the top or bottom surface, and
at least one generally vertical locator wall formed in each block side at a location between the front surface and the rear surface,
said locator walls extending from a generally planar and horizontal portion of the top or bottom surface opposite the surface on which the one or more locator protrusions are formed,
and
each locator wall being adapted to interact with a portion of the protrusion on a block in an adjacent course of blocks when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses to form a retaining wall so that the locator walls and locator protrusions of adjacent blocks in adjacent courses contact each other in a shear-resisting position in which interference between the locator protrusions and inset walls resist the tendency of a block in the upper course to slide forward in response to the anticipated forces that will be exerted on the block by retained earth;
and wherein the locator protrusions and the locator walls are sized and shaped to permit relative rotation of the adjacent blocks to thereby facilitate the construction of serpentine walls while maintaining said shear-resisting position.

83. (Previously presented) The block of claim 82 wherein the one or more locator protrusions are formed on the block body in such a location relative to the locator walls that, when a plurality of like blocks are stacked in ascending courses, and the protrusions and locator walls are in the shear-resisting position, the blocks in each ascending course are set back from the blocks in the adjacent course below.

84. (Previously presented) The block of claim 82, wherein the one or more protrusions each include a curved portion that is configured to contact the locator wall in the shear resisting position.

85. (Previously presented) The block of claim 82 wherein the locator protrusion comprises first and second curved end sections between which is positioned a joining section.